

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a blatant misuse of their license to promote a partisan agenda.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. To any reasonable person this means thorough and neutral reporting. Sinclair has ignored this duty and continues to manipulate news, having refused to air a simple reading of names of Americans killed in Iraq as "political"; it now hypocritically promotes an anti-Kerry screed as "news." It has also tended to use material produced at "News Central" far away, rather than local news of real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. Increased consolidation will only strengthen these pernicious tendencies. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. TV licenses in our area come up for renewal next year, and some of us will be watching to see how critically the FCC examines applicants for their service of the public interest. Thank you.